

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-33 stand rejected.

Claims 1, 3-5, 9-10, 13-14, 19-20, 23-27, 30-31 and 33 have been amended.

Claims 2, 11-12, 21-22 and 28-29 have been cancelled.

Claim Objections

Claims 20-26 are objected to. Applicants have amended claims 20-26 to address the Examiner's concerns. Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to claims 20-26 is overcome thereby.

Double Patenting

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25 and 27-33 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over various claims of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,247. A Terminal Disclaimers To Obviate A Double Patenting Rejection Over A Patent is being filed concurrently with this Response with regard to U.S. Patent No. 6,687,247 to obviate this rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 10-11, 20-21, 27-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takada, U.S. Patent No. 4,878,218 (“Takada”).

As an initial matter, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is now moot as to claims 2, 11-12, 21-22 and 28-29, as these claims have been cancelled.

While not conceding that the cited reference qualifies as prior art, but instead to expedite prosecution, Applicants have chosen to respectfully traverse the rejection in light of the amendments made to independent claims 1, 10, 20 and 27. Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 10, 20 and 27 to include limitations believed to be allowable, and so believe this rejection to be overcome thereby. Applicants reserve the right, for example, in a continuing application, to establish that the cited reference, or other references cited now or hereafter, do not qualify as prior art as to an invention embodiment previously, currently, or subsequently claimed.

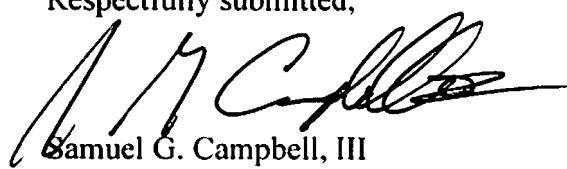
Applicants, having amended independent claims 1, 10, 20 and 27 to include pertinent limitations of certain claims not objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as well as those of corresponding intervening claims, therefore respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome thereby, and that claims 1, 3-10, 13-20, 23-27 and 30-33 are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5084.

If any extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) are required in order for this submission to be considered timely, Applicant hereby petitions for such extensions. Applicant also hereby authorizes that any fees due for such extensions or any other fee associated with this submission, as specified in 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17, be charged to deposit account 502306.

Respectfully submitted,



Samuel G. Campbell, III
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 42,381
Telephone: (512) 439-5084
Facsimile: (512) 439-5099